

**REMARKS**

In the present application, Applicant has cancelled all the claims and added new method claims 19-26.

New claim 19 requires taking a mower cleaning tool with an elongated handle having first and second opposite ends, the mower cleaning tool's handle being longer than the radius of the mower blade. Claim 19 further requires positioning the sharpened edge of the scraping blade beneath and in contact with the mower deck with the first end of the handle being located beneath the lower surface of the deck and the second end of the handle extending outside the perimeter of the mower deck. Use of greater length of the handle than the radius of the blade distinguishes over the prior art of Crook, cited by the Examiner. Referring to Figure 1 of Crook, the handle 40 is not positioned outside the perimeter of the deck. The cleaning tool of Crook would be ineffective as a cleaning tool if the handle were maintained and gripped outside the perimeter of the deck as required by claim 19.

Another requirement of claim 19 is the step of scraping the lower surface of the mower deck by moving the handle in a direction parallel to the longitudinal axis of the handle so that the sharpened edge of the handle scrapes the mower deck. In Crook, the prior art only shows substantially perpendicular movement to the longitudinal axis of the handle.

Crook, col. 2, line 22, states that the length of the handle portion 48 will be on the order of  $4 \frac{5}{8}$  inches and that the length of the blade portion 50 is typically 3 inches when used on a mower having a single cutting element and would typically be in the order of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches for a mower having two cutting elements. Thus, Crook only shows the use of scraper less than the radius of the mower blade which is usually no less than 9 inches for an 18 inch blade.

Claims 20-25 depend from claim 19 and are patentable for the reasons set forth as to that claim.

Claim 20 further requires pushing the handle to cause the sharpened edge of the blade to scrape debris from the under surface of the deck. None of the prior art relating to mowers shows this pushing action for removing debris from a lawn mower deck.

Claim 21 requires positioning a 20° angled blade so that the sharpened edge of the blade is presented upwardly and in contact with the lower surface of the mower deck. Again, none of the prior art relating to methods for cleaning mower decks show this step in the method.

Claim 24 further requires placing the second leg of the blade in contact with the mower deck, and using the sharpened edge to scrape debris from the lower surface of the mower deck. Claim 25 requires the steps of both pushing and pulling the hand to scrape debris from the lower surface of the deck. None of the prior art shows these steps in the method.

Claim 26 requires the steps of scraping the sharpened edge of the second leg on the downwardly presented surface of the mower deck and scraping the sharpened edge of the first leg on the vertical perimetric edge of the mower deck. None of the prior art teaches this method in combination with the method of claim 19.

Therefore, for all those reasons, claims 19-26 overcome all the previous rejections by the Examiner based on the Crook patent or other prior art and are allowable.

No fees or extensions of time are believed to be due in connection with this amendment; however, consider this a request for any extension inadvertently omitted, and charge any additional fees to Deposit Account No. 26-0084.

Reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael G. Voorhees". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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